



**Project:** Langdon (local) Historic District  
**Application Type:** Creation of Historic District  
**Legistar File ID #** [31625](#)  
**Prepared By:** Amy L. Scanlon, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

## Summary

**Applicant/Property Owner:** Connor Nett, Ben Agatston, Emily Erickson (applicants)

**Requested Action/Proposal Summary:** The applicants are requesting that the Landmarks Commission prepare a preservation plan for a potential Langdon Historic District.

**Applicable Regulations & Standards:** Section 33.19 of the Madison General Ordinances (see below)

**Review Required By:** Landmarks Commission

## Background Information

### Relevant Landmarks Ordinance Sections:

#### 33.19(6)(d) Creation of Historic Districts.

1. For preservation purposes, the Landmarks Commission shall select geographically defined areas within the City of Madison to be designated as Historic Districts and shall, with the assistance of the City Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development, prepare an historic preservation plan in ordinance form for each area. An Historic District may be designated for any geographic area of particular historic, architectural, or cultural significance to the City of Madison which:
  - a. Exemplifies or reflects the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state or community; or
  - b. Is identified with historic personages or with important events in national, state or local history; or
  - c. Embodies the distinguishing characteristics of architectural type specimens inherently valuable for the study of a period or periods, styles, methods or construction, indigenous materials or craftsmanship; or
  - d. Is representative of the notable works of master builders, designers, or architects who influenced their age.Each historic preservation plan prepared for or by the Landmarks Commission shall include a cultural and architectural analysis supporting the historic significance of the area, the specific guidelines for development and a statement of preservation objectives.
2. Guideline criteria to be considered in the development of Historic District plans are as follows:
  - a. All new structures shall be constructed to a height visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which they are visually related.
  - b. The gross volume of any new structure shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.
  - c. In the street elevation(s) of a building, the proportion between the width and height in the facade(s) should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.

- d. The proportions and relationships between doors and windows in the street facade(s) should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.
  - e. The rhythm of solids to voids, created by openings in the facade, should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.
  - f. The existing rhythm created by existing building masses and spaces between them should be preserved.
  - g. The materials used in the final facade(s) should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.
  - h. The texture inherent in the facade should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.
  - i. Colors and patterns used on the facade (especially trim) should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.
  - j. The design of the roof should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.
  - k. The landscape plan should be sensitive to the individual building, its occupants and their needs. Further, the landscape treatment should be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related.
  - l. All street facade(s) should blend with other buildings via directional expression. When adjacent buildings have a dominant horizontal or vertical expression, this expression should be carried over and reflected.
  - m. Architectural details should be incorporated as necessary to relate the new with the old and to preserve and enhance the inherent characteristics of the area.
3. The guideline criteria for construction of and alterations and additions to buildings and structures in historic districts are designed to provide an understandable set of standards to ensure that alterations to the exterior of existing buildings and the creation of new buildings will be done in a manner sensitive to the character of each historic district. It is not the intent of this ordinance to discourage contemporary architectural expression that is visually compatible with its environment and otherwise meets the standards in the ordinance, to encourage the rote emulation of existing building styles or to prevent the prior lawful conforming use of buildings that are reconstructed following destruction by fire or other natural disaster. A sensitively designed building in a contemporary style may better preserve and enhance the inherent characteristics of a historic district than a mediocre adaptation of a more traditional style.
4. Review and Adoption Procedure.
- a. Landmarks Commission. The Landmarks Commission shall hold a public hearing when considering the plan for an Historic District. Notice of the time, place and purpose of such hearing shall be given by publication as a Class 2 Notice under the Wisconsin Statutes in the official City paper. Notice of the time, place and purpose of such public hearing shall also be sent by the City Clerk to the Alder of the Aldermanic District or Districts in which the Historic District is located, and the owners of record, as listed in the office of the City Assessor, who are owners of property situated in whole or in part within the Historic District, or situated in whole or in part within two hundred (200) feet of the boundaries of the Historic District. Said notice is to be sent at least ten (10) days prior to the date of such public hearing. Following the public hearing, the Landmarks Commission shall vote to recommend, reject or withhold action on the plan. This recommendation shall be forwarded to the City Plan Commission and the Common Council.
  - b. The City Plan Commission. The Plan Commission shall review the Historic District plan and make a recommendation to the Common Council. The Plan Commission shall make its recommendation on the Historic District plan within thirty (30) days.
  - c. The Common Council. The Common Council, upon receipt of the recommendations from the Landmarks Commission and Plan Commission, shall hold a public hearing, notice to be given as noted in Subparagraph a. above, and shall following said public hearing either designate or

reject the Historic District. Designation of the Historic District shall constitute adoption of the plan in ordinance form prepared for that district and direct the implementation of said plan.

## **Analysis and Conclusion**

Staff met with the applicants to discuss the process for the creation of a historic district as outlined in the Landmarks Ordinance (above). Staff suggested that the applicants prepare a letter to alert the Landmarks Commission of their interest and that the letter contain information similar to the information in a landmarks nomination. Staff believes that the letter clearly explains the interests of the Applicants.

## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Landmarks Commission receive the letter and request that staff consider including the development of a preservation plan in an upcoming annual work program.